

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (canceled)
2. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 1 Claim 39 wherein ~~the web page interface is a hypertext markup language interface and the method further comprises creating a template from the web interface which accepts business metrics data prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to create a calculation formula data field displayed on the created template, the calculation formula data field showing a formula used for calculating data displayed on the created template.~~
3. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 2 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises creating a field for entry of one or more business metrics definitions in a template and uploading the template into the database generating a plurality of reports further comprises: performing at least one mathematical computation using the business metrics stored in the database, the computations are performed by the server and include at least one of summing, averaging, time weight averaging; and~~
~~generating a trend analysis based on the business metrics stored within the database by prompting a user to select the business units to be included within the trend analysis and a type of measure to be analyzed.~~
4. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 3 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises entering a textual definition into one of the business metrics definitions prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to assign a definition to each data field displayed on the created template.~~
5. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 4 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises selecting and creating a validation for a user selected field of a template prompting a~~

first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to create a data field for validating a business metric entered into the created template.

6. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 4 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises adding a select box feature to a field of a template prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to create a drop-down box for entering a business metric into the created template, the drop-down box having a plurality of data selection created by the first user to be selected by the second user when entering business metrics.~~

7. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 6 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises electronically linking a metric target with a field of a template prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to link a metric target with a data field displayed on the created template.~~

8. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 7 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises linking a parameter selected from a level and a weight to one or more of the fields of a template prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to link at least one of a level and a weight to a data field displayed on the created template.~~

9. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 8 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises creating a field category for a template prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to create at least one field category and an order for displaying the at least one field category on the created template.~~

10. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 9 Claim 39 wherein ~~the method comprises changing a field of said template prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to change a data field displayed on the created template.~~

11. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 9 Claim 39 wherein the method comprises modifying one of the field definitions of a template prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to modify a definition assigned to a data field displayed on the created template.

12. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 9 Claim 39 wherein the method comprises modifying a template by changing the order of appearance of the fields prompting a first user to create a customized template further comprises prompting the first user to modify the created template by changing an order of appearance of the data fields displayed on the created template.

13. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 1 Claim 39 wherein the method comprises modifying a template by adding one or more entities to a template creating at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity further comprises changing the at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity by prompting the first user to add or remove at least one business unit from the at least one hierarchy of entities.

14.-38. (canceled)

39. (new) A method for managing business metrics for a business entity using a server system coupled to a database and at least one client system, the business entity having a plurality of business units, said method comprising the steps of:

storing in the database a plurality of web pages including a create template web page;

prompting a first user to create a customized template for receiving business metrics by displaying at the at least one client system the create template web page, the create template web page prompts the first user to enter data including at least one of a template name, a frequency, a first due date, a contact name, and a template description, the create template web page prompts the first user to designate a number of data fields to be displayed on the created template and a

type of business metrics to be entered into the created template, the created template is stored within the database for retrieval by a second user for inputting business metrics;

creating at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity including storing within the database a relationship between each of the business units included within the business entity;

linking the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for restricting access to the created template to only selected business units included within the business entity;

linking selected data fields included within the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for combining data for a plurality of selected business units included within the business entity;

displaying the created template at the at least one client system to prompt the second user to enter business metrics relating a business unit linked to the created template, the second user enters business metrics into the data fields displayed on the created template;

storing the business metrics in the database;

analyzing the business metrics stored in the database using the server system; and

generating using the server a plurality of reports including a first report showing business metrics for each business unit linked to the created template including each business unit having entered data and the hierarchical relationship between each business unit, and a second report combining business metrics entered into linked data fields for each business unit linked to the created template based on the hierarchy of entities.

40. (new) A network-based system for managing business metrics for a business entity, the business entity having a plurality of business units, said system comprising:

a client system comprising a browser;

a centralized database for storing information; and

a server system configured to be coupled to said client system and said database, said server further configured to:

store in the database a plurality of web pages including a create template web page;

prompt a first user to create a customized template for receiving business metrics by displaying at the client system the create template web page, the create template web page prompts the first user to enter data including at least one of a template name, a frequency, a first due date, a contact name, and a template description, the create template web page prompts the first user to designate a number of data fields to be displayed on the created template and a type of business metrics to be entered into the created template, the created template is stored within the database for retrieval by a second user for inputting business metrics;

record at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity including storing within the database a relationship between each of the business units included within the business entity;

link the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for restricting access to the created template to only selected business units included within the business entity;

link selected data fields included within the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for combining data for a plurality of selected business units included within the business entity;

display the created template at the client system to prompt the second user to enter business metrics relating a business unit linked to the created template, the second user enters business metrics into the data fields displayed on the created template;

store the business metrics in the database;

analyze the business metrics stored in the database; and

generate a plurality of reports including a first report showing business metrics for each business unit linked to the created template including each business unit having entered data and the hierarchical relationship between each business unit, and a second report combining business metrics entered into linked data fields for each business unit linked to the created template based on the hierarchy of entities.

41. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to create a calculation formula data field displayed on the created template, the calculation formula data field showing a formula used for calculating data displayed on the created template.

42. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to:

perform at least one mathematical computation using the business metrics stored in the database, the computations performed include at least one of summing, averaging, time weight averaging; and

generate a trend analysis based on the business metrics stored within the database by prompting a user to select the business units to be included within the trend analysis and a type of measure to be analyzed.

43. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to assign a definition to each data field displayed on the created template.

44. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to create a data field for validating a business metric entered into the created template.

45. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to create a drop-down box for entering a business metric into the created template, the drop-down box having a plurality of data selection created by the first user to be selected by the second user when entering business metrics.

46. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to link a metric target with a data field displayed on the created template.

47. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to create at least one field category and an order for displaying the at least one field category on the created template.

48. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to change a data field displayed on the created template.

49. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to modify a definition assigned to a data field displayed on the created template.

50. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to prompt the first user to modify the created template by changing an order of appearance of the data fields displayed on the created template.

51. (new) The system according to Claim 40 wherein said server system further configured to change the at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity by prompting the first user to add or remove at least one business unit from the at least one hierarchy of entities.

52. (new) Apparatus for managing business metrics for a business entity, the business entity having a plurality of business units, said apparatus comprising:

a database for storing information and a plurality of web pages; and

a computer coupled to the database, said computer programmed to:

store in the database a plurality of web pages including a create template web page;

prompt a first user to create a customized template for receiving business metrics by displaying the create template web page, the create template web page prompts the first user to enter data including at least one of a template name, a frequency, a first due date, a contact name, and a template description, the create template web page prompts the first user to designate a number of data fields to be displayed on the created template and a type of business metrics to be entered into the created template, the created template is stored within the database for retrieval by a second user for inputting business metrics;

record at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity including storing within the database a relationship between each of the business units included within the business entity;

link the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for restricting access to the created template to only selected business units included within the business entity;

link selected data fields included within the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for combining data for a plurality of selected business units included within the business entity;

display the created template to prompt the second user to enter business metrics relating a business unit linked to the created template, the second user enters business metrics into the data fields displayed on the created template;

store the business metrics in the database;

analyze the business metrics stored in the database; and

generate a plurality of reports including a first report showing business metrics for each business unit linked to the created template including each business unit having entered data and the hierarchical relationship between each business unit, and a second report combining business metrics entered into linked data fields for each business unit linked to the created template based on the hierarchy of entities.

53. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to create a calculation formula data field displayed on the created template, the calculation formula data field showing a formula used for calculating data displayed on the created template.

54. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to:

perform at least one mathematical computation using the business metrics stored in the database, the computations performed include at least one of summing, averaging, time weight averaging; and

generate a trend analysis based on the business metrics stored within the database by prompting a user to select the business units to be included within the trend analysis and a type of measure to be analyzed.

55. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to assign a definition to each data field displayed on the created template.

56. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to create a data field for validating a business metric entered into the created template.

57. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to create a drop-down box for entering a business metric into the created template, the drop-down box having a plurality of data selection created by the first user to be selected by the second user when entering business metrics.

58. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to link a metric target with a data field displayed on the created template.

59. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to create at least one field category and an order for displaying the at least one field category on the created template.

60. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to change a data field displayed on the created template.

61. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to modify a definition assigned to a data field displayed on the created template.

62. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the first user to modify the created template by changing an order of appearance of the data fields displayed on the created template.

63. (new) The apparatus according to Claim 52 wherein said computer is further programmed to change the at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity by prompting the first user to add or remove at least one business unit from the at least one hierarchy of entities.

64. (new) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for managing business metrics for a business entity, the business entity having a plurality of business units, said program comprising at least one code segment that stores in a database a plurality of web pages including a create template web page and then:

prompts a first user to create a customized template for receiving business metrics by displaying the create template web page on a computer, the create template web page prompts the first user to enter data including at least one of a template name, a frequency, a first due date, a contact name, and a template description, the create template web page prompts the first user to designate a number of data fields to be displayed on the created template and a type of business metrics to be entered into the created template, the created template is stored within the database for retrieval by a second user for inputting business metrics;

records at least one hierarchy of entities within the business entity including storing within the database a relationship between each of the business units included within the business entity;

links the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for restricting access to the created template to only selected business units included within the business entity;

links selected data fields included within the created template to the at least one hierarchy of entities for combining data for a plurality of selected business units included within the business entity;

displays the created template on the computer to prompt the second user to enter business metrics relating a business unit linked to the created template, the second user enters business metrics into the data fields displayed on the created template;

stores the business metrics in the database;

analyzes the business metrics stored in the database; and

generates a plurality of reports including a first report showing business metrics for each business unit linked to the created template including each business unit having entered data and the hierarchical relationship between each business unit, and a second report combining business metrics entered into linked data fields for each business unit linked to the created template based on the hierarchy of entities.